

# AVIATION

*The Oldest American Aeronautical Magazine*

JANUARY 21, 1924

Issued Weekly

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Yellowstone Falls Seen from the Air

VOLUME  
XVI

## SPECIAL FEATURES

NUMBER  
3

REPORT OF THE NAVAL ARCTIC AIR BOARD  
AIR APPROPRIATIONS IN THE 1924-25 BUDGET  
PLANS FOR THE 1924 INTERNATIONAL AIR RACES  
FRANCE DEVELOPS MULTI-ENGINED TRANSPORT PLANES

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JANUARY 21, 1924

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# AVIATION

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### Air Legislation and Terminology

**F**OR the second time the Senate has passed the Bill introduced by Senator Wadsworth of New York for the regulation of air navigation, and it is confidently expected that the House will shortly do likewise with the "Civil Aeronautics Act" introduced by Representative Winslow of Massachusetts. Should this come about, it is understood that a compromise bill embodying the best features of the two measures will be worked out in conference and submitted to Congress for final passage. Then, the hopes that Federal regulation of air navigation will be an accomplished fact this year are lighter than they ever were before.

In the confusion it seems necessary to call attention to one of the terminologies used in the Winslow Bill. Most important of these, of course is "aeronaut." This word has been used to designate "any individual (including the master, and any pilot, mechanic or member of the crew) engaged in the operation of aircraft while under way, and any ground engineer engaged in the inspection, overhauling or repairing of aircraft." This all inclusive word seems entirely satisfactory in a general term for general use, and was included at the suggestion of aeronautical advisors. It would be a good pointer to popularize the word by referring to the armed forces of the United States as "the soldiers, sailors and airmen" of the country. It would, in particular emphasize the importance of the air in armaments in national defense.

Other new terms used in the Winslow Bill, such as "facility" and "aircraft" may prove more difficult to popularize, but the reasons for their inclusion seem sound.

Altogether, the terms used in the Winslow Bill appear to be well chosen and well defined. They should be adopted and used as widely as possible, particularly by the daily press, some of which still call an airplane an airship.

### Multi-Motored Transport Airplanes

**F**ROM the extensive operation of social passenger transport in Europe under greatly varying physical and technical conditions there is slowly crystallizing a volume of experience which is drawing the closest attention of those concerned with commercial air transport. One of the cardinal points of this experience is the apparent need of multi-motored planes in modes where the ground organization or the physical aspect of the ground do not offer ready and frequent emergency landing fields. The other point in the desirability of substituting for the new common system of flying a course by following landmarks the more scientific and positive system of air navigation by means of instruments, which has aptly been called "direct course flight."

Both these points have a direct and powerful bearing on the safety of air transport, and thus are apt to influence the future growth of commercial aviation to a very considerable

degree. The drawbacks of possible engine failure, the greatest single factor in the present comparative uncertainty of commercial air transport, would, if it generally occurred, be almost entirely overcome by multi-motored power plants. Though there are many set forth all the consequences of engine failure, it seems at any rate far surer that such an airplane would always be able to reach an emergency landing ground even though one of its engines has failed. Two-engined planes are generally regarded as unsuitable for this purpose for the failure of one engine reduces the total available horsepower by one-half a source to allow of safe horizontal flight for any length of time. While it is true that with three and four engines ships the so-called mathematical probability of engine failure is increased—since there are more engines and moving parts—there is still the possibility of failure—it nevertheless seems reasonable that in practice three or four engines will give a commercial airplane a greater factor of operational safety than one or two engines.

As to the general adoption of direct course flight, experiments made by the Army Air Service and the Air Mail Service seem to show that in most cases where airplanes would be incapable of reaching their destination in the old long range mode by using ground bearings, navigation by direct course methods at altitudes out of reach of local weather disturbances generally secures the successful completion of the flight. Hence the general use of direct course methods would greatly increase the security and dependability of public air transport.

### 1924 Pulitzer Races

**W**ITH the announcement of Dayton as the place for the next international air race next, there comes to us word from Paris that six or seven French constructors are building new pursuit planes to take part in the 1924 race. They have great confidence in their ability to beat the speed records that have been made in this country last year. Another group is building airplanes to try to repeat the Schneider Cup.

This is significant too, for it means that the rivalry which has been confined to our Army and Navy Air Services will become international in scope. Holding the world's speed records, as we do, there would be little incentive to build new types unless passed by possible foreign competitors.

The invitation extended to Germany was made on behalf of the National Aeronautics Association by G. S. Johnson promptly after the St. Louis race has evidently been considered favorably and the possibility of a real international competition this year will create a greater interest in those events than ever before.

The racing contestants may be assumed that they will receive a most cordial welcome from the American aeronautical community and that they will be granted every facility for adequately preparing their chance of success in the forthcoming race.





### The Improved Goliath

The other Farman entry, type P45, is a modified Goliath, in which four engines with tandem propellers have been substituted for the two engines of the standard ship of this type. The structure has also been generally reinforced to take care of the greater load carried. The main characteristics of this ship are as follows:

**CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FARMAN P45 REPLACEMENT**  
 Type P45, 1923  
 Engines, 4 Hispano  
 Span, 104 ft. 6 in.  
 Gross weight, 10,000 lb.  
 Wing area, 1,000 sq. ft.  
 No. of crew, 2

Although this ship has seats for eighteen passengers, it was only entered in the competition with a pay load of 120 lb., corresponding to eight passengers and baggage. This the company was due to the large amount of special equipment carried on board.

This machine was the second prize in the Grand Prix.

### The Birot Type 115

This ship, which secured third place in the Grand Prix, is a four-engined biplane in which the engines are mounted on the leading edge of the upper and lower wings as that all drive outer screws. The accompanying illustration shows the side view of this machine, which was designed by the Birot firm on the "Massachusetts," produced late in 1923. Its trials were not a success, however. Birot produced for the 1921 Paris race a four-engined transport plane with tandem screws. It is understood that this second multi-engined ship was no more successful than the first one, and last year a third type was produced, in which the engines concentrated engine mounting was again resorted to. Since the same motor changes, introduced again, this ship was the type 115 which participated in the Grand Prix.

In view of the toxicity with which the Birot Co. has pursued the refinement of the quad-engine engine, it is interesting to learn the story back of it.

Granting the operational difficulties of four-engined planes, says *L'Air*, if we equip a plane with four engines, we have the same disadvantage as in multi-engined ships, namely, that of having one engine in the fuselage, whose noise, heat and oil fumes penetrate into the passenger cabin. Hence, it is only with a maximum of four engines that the problem of noise and comfort can satisfactorily be solved. But with four engines the best tandem arrangement is not an im-

efficient utilization of horsepower, while the "in-line" arrangement—as in the Zeppelin-Staaken monoplane—introduces great moments of torsion, which may become dangerous should one of the outer engines fail.

With the Birot "square" engine mounting, which has now been developed into the better "trapeze" mounting—the top engines being spaced wider than the bottom ones—it is claimed that the drawbacks of the four-engined power plants are mostly avoided, inasmuch as the propeller tips are spaced very closely, and fuselage of one engine would but little affect the stability of the ship.

The remarkable performance of the Birot 115 in its Grand Prix flight, in very gusty weather, and completed the trip on three engines, would seem to justify these views.

The chief characteristics of this ship are as follows:

**CHARACTERISTICS OF BIROT TYPE 115 REPLACEMENT**  
 Type 115, 1923  
 Engines, 4 Hispano  
 Span, 104 ft. 6 in.  
 Gross weight, 10,000 lb.  
 Wing area, 1,000 sq. ft.  
 No. of crew, 2

Although equipped to carry eight passengers, this ship only carried six of them in the competition.

Constructively the Birot 115 is of fairly orthodox lines, the wings being built around wooden box spars and plywood ribs, while the fuselage is of the four longnose type, with plywood bulkheads and wire braced off.

### The Birot Type 115

The Birot type 22, or modified Leventhal, was described in three columns in connection with the last Paris race when it will be remembered that as its original form the Leventhal had a central engine room with four Birot-Bugatti motors driving a single tractor propeller through an epicyclic drive, a somewhat complicated gearing system, in which provision was made for the automatic disengagement of an engine that would not "pull up" sufficiently. Despite its complexity and its complicated movements so far in operation of the power plant was so much, this system was discarded because it took up too much space in the fuselage, and instead tandem wing engines were substituted in a four-engine design.

The main feature in the construction of this ship is the almost exclusive use of duralumin tubes and stampings in all structural members. The wing spars are tubes, the ribs are stampings, and the fuselage is built up of duralumin strips



From Kati & Mathew

The Birot model 115 (four 180 hp. Hispano-Suiza engines) which secured third place in the French Air Transport Grand Prix competition. Photo: Kati & Mathew

of duralum and corner sections, riveted together. The wings are fabric-covered, however.

In the Grand Prix the Leventhal was equipped with a pay load of twelve passengers.

The main characteristics of the Birot type 22 are as follows:—

**CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BIROT TYPE 22 REPLACEMENT**  
 Type 22, 1923  
 Engines, 4 Hispano  
 Span, 104 ft. 6 in.  
 Gross weight, 10,000 lb.  
 Wing area, 1,000 sq. ft.  
 No. of crew, 2

### Peter's Three Engine Plane

The Peter type 21 is a more heavily engined version of the five-motored passenger carrier, type 17, which was exhibited at the last Paris race, and was described here in that connection. The three 270 hp. Lawrence-Devick engines of type 17 have been replaced in type 21 by three Jupiter engines built in France under license by the Hispano-Suiza Co. The engine is rated 350 hp. in England, and 390 hp. in France.

The principal characteristics of the Peter type 22 are as follows:—

**CHARACTERISTICS OF PETER TYPE 22 REPLACEMENT**  
 Type 22, 1923  
 Engines, 3 Jupiter  
 Span, 104 ft. 6 in.  
 Gross weight, 10,000 lb.  
 Wing area, 1,000 sq. ft.  
 No. of crew, 2

The ship was an extremely heavily loaded of fairly orthodox lines and composite construction. The wings, of rather thin section here wooden box spars and plywood ribs, and are fabric-covered. The interplane struts are duralumin dome-like tubes. The aluminum are of the balanced type. The fuselage is of upper cross section, wooden longnose and plywood bulkheads being used in the construction of the sides, while single section duralumin members, riveted together, form the rear portion of the fuselage. The cabin is tunnel covered, with floors covering it well on the metal portion of the fuselage. The cabin is 10 ft. long, 5 ft. high, and is equipped with eight passenger seats, although as the Grand Prix only the equivalent of six passengers was carried.

The engine are all arranged for tractor propellers. The central engine is mounted on a steel plate in the face of the engine, while the two remaining Japans are carried behind the wings in V struts. All the engines are fully exposed to the air stream, which may be necessary for efficient cooling, though it produces much greater resistance. A Bristol auxiliary engine, fixed in the fuselage, serves to start the main power plant.

The landing gear is of the four wheel "in-line" type made famous in this country by the original Martin Bomber. The tail wheel is chiefly remarkable for the use of two opposing rollers, mounted on either side of the main landing roller, which can be set at a given angle to offset the turning tendency of the ship when one of the wing engines is out of action.

### Rules of Elimination Trials

The elimination trials comprised the following performance tests:—

- (1) Take off and landing with a "ground crew" not to exceed 350 lb.
- (2) A flight of 15 min. duration up to an altitude of 5,000 ft. With one of the engines stopped, without the other engines exceeding their normal rated horsepower.
- (3) Each of the engines must be stopped and started again while the ship describes an eight figure eight, without the engine exceeding 15 min. in starting up. The plane must describe an eight figure eight as there are engines on board.
- (4) Two separate flights to be shown in flight on two different engines designated beforehand by the judges' request. The engines may be stopped for the purpose of the test, but in this case they must be restarted before the plane lands.

All these performances must be made in a single flight, or in separate flights, and in two days.

### Elimination Trials

The elimination trials were scheduled for Sept. 17 and 18. On the first day, low hanging clouds prevented the judges to reduce the height prescribed for the 15 min. flight with one motor stopped from 5,000 ft. to 3,500 ft. Even so, the victory was no longer in doubt. The Birot 115 was the only one of all the elimination trials that day, had the performance dictated by the judges. But Farman attempted the trials, but only the Goliath was fully qualified, the Farman being unable to take off and land within the stipulated 15 min. The Birot was not yet ready, while the Peter had engine trouble.

On Sept. 18 the weather was so bad that the judges postponed the trials to the following day, when the Farman monoplane completed its elimination trials and the Birot was qualified by repeating them to the satisfaction of the judges. The latter ship took off with its full load in 30 ft. The Birot, carrying 500 lb. of cargo, three tank off the trials. After making the altitude flight with one motor stopped, and the three engines requiring the necessary stopping and starting at all engines in flight, the ship proceeded to make the most difficult of the trials, that of changing in flight a spark plug on two of its engines. One "misfiring" but successfully was accomplished, but when the time of the rear duralumin motor engine, it failed to start again. Nevertheless, the pilot "hang on" in the hope of completing all the trials in a single flight, when the front starboard motor began misfiring and the ship stalled and slid "dipped" from 30 ft. to the ground. The landing gear was damaged, but though the ship was not badly damaged, one of the fuselage tanks burst, and caught fire before the motors could be cut. The crew promptly evacuated and, unscathed, and before the fire could get out the engine room of the engine room of fuselage, fell by 400 gal. of gasoline, which completely destroyed the ship in a few minutes.

While this was happening, the Peter made all the elimination trials, but the performance was dissatisfied, for in making



The Farman P45 (four 265 hp. Salomon engines) which finished second in the French Air Transport Grand Prix competition. Photo: Bissacard and Drouhin















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